

# **A Critical Writing on Pip's Great Expectations**

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Charles Dickens novel "The Great Expectations" is narrated by Pip, who is the hero of the story. At the beginning, the audience can clearly see hardships that Pip had faced while he was a kid. It becomes obvious that living without parents from the early stages of his life is full of miseries and sadness. The reader also understands that children easily believe in what older people say and the strong example is when Pip visits his parent's graves and faces the escaped prisoner. The abusive behavior of Pip's sister and the kind treatment of his brother-in-law leads him to believe that blood connection does not mean anything important to him but words.

The appearance of Miss. Havisham and Estella in the early chapters adds more excitement. They represent pride, revenge, and ambition for making others suffer. Pip's love for Estella which starts at the first sight when he meets her at Miss. Havisham's house, his feelings for Estella, and his words such as "very pretty and very proud" makes the reader think that beauty plays a vital role in making people fall in love. Pip's feelings of being common in front of Estella makes him look at his own social life and take very big decisions. He accepts Estella's unkindness—"Why, he is a common labouring-boy!" He believes that Estella is right, that's why he even does not defend himself in front of her. Through that we can learn that appearances and power greatly change the way people think.

The themes of self-improvement and ambition for making changes in his social life, motivate Pip to dream of great

expectations. He anticipates that if he makes progress in his life, he would have the chance to marry Estella. He doesn't expect that forgetting his past and personal life would turn him into a different person. Pip forgets that the journey towards fame and being a gentleman would make him sacrifice the closest ones in the family such as Mr. Joe who has always been there to give help since his childhood. He also ignores the true feelings of a young lady called Biddy although she provides the family the best care after the death of Mrs. Joe. Pip knows that Biddy is the one who can make a successful family even though she was a common girl like him. The reader becomes aware that Pip is somehow egocentric.

As Pip gets financial support from an anonymous character to get education in London and be a gentleman, he leaves Mr. Joe as if he is leaving an ordinary man. From that point, it becomes clear that Pip is not simply the same innocent person who was thinking of Joe as his best friend. The audience learns that Pip will soon forget all the favors from Mr. Joe and would not even be glad to pay a visit to Joe when he is an educated man. For instance, Pip only visits Joe when he is asked by Miss. Havisham to come to Satis House where he hopes to meet Estella.

Surprisingly, Pip finds the man who secretly has been paying for his learning and wants a noble future for him. He knows the man because he has seen him many years ago when he was an escaped convict. Through this the reader asks why a runaway prisoner would help such a poor boy. The answer may be because Pip helped him by bringing some food and keeping his place secret. While some others may just claim that Pip was an orphan and Abel Magwich, the prisoner felt sympathy with the boy for being an orphan. However, I believe that making many mistakes and feeling

sorry for what he has done made the prisoner do a good deed which is helping a poor boy to have a bright life.

As Pip reaches a certain age, he realize that Joe has done a lot for him and he always owe him everything. He says “Home was never a pleasant place for me, because of my sister’s temper. But Joe had sanctified it.” Therefore, Pip appreciates Joe’s role as one of the most important stages of life which is childhood due to Joe’s constant protection of him. He also believes in Biddy’s ability to give him something which is Estella. He is aware that Miss. Havisham has made Estella a toy in her hands to take revenge from men. He knows that Biddy is the one who can give him happiness and comfort, but he is in love with Estella on the other hand. The reader is quite convinced that Pip’s love for Estella will not succeed and will soon lead to conflicts because of her disinterest in Pip and her lack of respect for Pip.

Pip’s arrival to London makes him change his perception of being in another perfect world. The first thing he sees is the terrible and dirt Newgate Prison which gives Pip the dark part of life in a city such as London. He finds Mr. Jaggers who seems hard, cold, and powerful, but in reality he is extremely disgusted by work. He finds Mr. Matthew who is Herbert’s father as kind as well, but his absent minded personality makes him a weak figure even in his own house. Pip comes to ask himself many questions. He thinks of the man who took some of Miss. Havisham’s money and left the city. He asks about Estella’s history and why is she so close to Miss. Havisham. The story progress and those questions get much more attention from Pip and he becomes really curious about finding their real answers.

Despite Pip's efforts to be a gentleman when he returns back to the Satis House, he shows his pride and faces Estella as a worthy man to win her. Estella treats him cruelly as ever by telling him that "No heart" which means no matter what he does, he will be the same person for her. As the reader observes that kind of behavior, he realizes that Pip's expectations to be a noble person fall upside down. The reader also learns that many people think that past life greatly affects the present. For that reason, he even treats Joe without too much hostility when Joe comes to London to meet him then by the pass of a short time, he regrets and asks God for forgiveness for being cold with Joe and Biddy.

As Pip becomes 21 years old, he makes some developments in his character. He seems to be more cooperative to his friends. He cares much more about Biddy and Joe, but he is still not ready to have them in his life in London. He still has the hope that Estella will change her attitude towards him. When he finds out that Estella is in a relationship with another person, he feels completely desperate and it disappoints him. Through this the reader knows that even Miss. Havisham could not turn Estella to what she wanted after Estella decided to marry someone and stood against Miss. Havisham's desires. The reader also sees that Pip failed to gain what he believed to be his especially when a loser in Pip's eyes take Estella for himself. However, the sense of hospitality is still within Pip, he finds that his benefactor who is a convict is in trouble and needs some help to run away from the prison ships.

Pip gives up looking for Estella when he finds out that she is married to someone whom he hates so much. He thinks that Miss. Havisham wanted him and Estella to be for each other when he says "I saw Miss Havisham put her hand to her heart and hold it there, as she sat looking by turns at Estella and at me." He ignores

the fact that Estella was brought up by Miss. Havisham to deceive men by her beauty and then to break their hearts such as with Pip. But the reader doesn't forget that even Miss. Havisham regrets hurting Pip. She gets that not all the men are the same and she has unjustly made Pip suffer from the cruelty of Estella. The reader blames Havisham for being unfair with Pip because she could see Pip's true feelings for Estella, so Miss. Havisham is responsible for Pip's Loss.

It is clear that Pip gets a proper education and makes a social progress, but it is humiliating time for him at the same time. Ironically, Pip's rise in social status leads him to a sharp decline in self-confidence and true happiness. His fears about the convict that he is obliged to give help and break the law and facing Joe in London are two contrasting phases. He has to prove himself to Joe as a gentleman and support a criminal who has put all of his money in Pip's hand for offering him a fascinating future. Pip even fails to recognize his enemies, for example when his life is threatened by one of the evil characters in the story. Even others blame for their misfortunes especially Orlick who intentionally attacks Pip to kill him for losing his work position at the Satis House and many other things. Pip is clearly told "I won't have a rag of you, I won't have a bone of you, left on earth," which is a real threat to take his life.

The death of his benefactor and Estella's last meeting leads Pip to change his understanding about life. His concern with social class seriously changes: he simply sees that his convict's behavior has been better to him than he himself has been to Mr. Joe, indicating that Pip has at last learned the greatest moral lesson in the novel. Faithfulness, affection, and human love are more important than social class and materialistic means. Estella's unsuccessful marriage hurts him even more meanwhile he has

unchanged feelings for her but she chooses him to be friends instead of being with him and loving him. Pip realizes that being high socially doesn't mean you get whatever you desire. The reader has the same feelings, Pip worked hard and hard to make his expectations come true. He forgot his social position and thought he is going to burn his past and identity and open a new phase of his life. Most importantly, he learnt the price of others who cared about him such as Mr. Joe and Miss. Biddy.